

# Functions of Nonverbal Behavior with Reference to Refugeeism: A Sociopragmatic Study

Assistant Professor:  
**Dr. Rauf Karim Mahmood**  
University of Sulaimani,  
University of Human Development

Ph.D. student in Applied Linguistics:  
**Bekhal Abubakir Hussein**  
University of Sulaimani

No. and date of approval: 77/7/29 in 7/4/2019

## پوختە

ئەم توپژینە وەهە بە تیزیکى دکتورا هەلپنجراو، بە ناویشانی "شیکردنە وەهە کی سۆسیۆپراگماتیکى پەیوەندیگرتنى نازارەکیی نیوکلتوربی: دۆخی پەنابەرانی لە هەریمی کوردستان بە نمونە". لە سەرتاسەری جیهاندا، پەیوەندیگرتنى نازارەکیی بۆ بەهیزکردنى لیکتینگەیشتن و هاریکاریی مرۆفایەتی، گرنگە. پێویستی راقەکردن و تیگەیشتن لەم جۆرە پەیوەندیگرتنە، لەسەر ئاستیکى بەرفراوان، لە نیوان گەلان و کلتورە هەمەرەنگەکاندا، بە تاییە تیش گروپە ئیتنیەکان، سەلمینراوە.

لەم سەردەمەدا، پەنابەریی بوو بە دیاردەیکى گەردوونی و ژمارەى پەنابەرانی بە هۆی مەملانی سیاسییە چەكدارییەکانی ولاتانی رۆژەهلاتی ناوەراستەو، لە هەلکشاندا. هەریمی کوردستان، بەکێکە لە ناوچە گەرمەکان کە میژووویەکی دیرینی لەگەڵ پەنابەریی، هەیه. لە لایەکەو، کوردەکان خۆیان چەندین جار رووبەرۆوی پەنابەریی بوونەتەو، لە لایەکیتریشەو ولاتەکیان بوو بە پەناگەیکى ئارام بۆ پەنابەر و ئاوارەکانی ناوچەکانی دەورووبەر. پەنابەرانی رووبەرۆوی زۆر گرتی سیاسی، ئابوری، کۆمەلایەتی و دەروونی دەبنەو. سەرەرای ئەمەش، ئاستەنگەکانی پەیوەندیگرتنى زارەکیی و نازارەکیی، کیشەکانیان زیاتر دەکات. لەبەرئەو، بەهیزکردنى پەیوەندیگرتن، پێویستیەکی بنەرەتی و هەنووکەییە بەمەبەستی مامەلەکردنى پەنابەرانی، بە میکانیزمی پەیوەندیگرتنى نازارەکیی سەرکەوتووتر. ئەم توپژینە وەهە، هەولیکە بۆ روونکردنەو هە ئەرکەکانی ئاماژە نازارەکییەکان لە هەلومەرجی سۆسیۆپراگماتیکى پەنابەرانی.

توپژینە وەهە بە پیناسەى چەمکەکانی سۆسیۆپراگماتیک و پەیوەندیگرتنى نازارەکیی دەست پیدەکات، پاشان ئەرکەکانی ئاماژە نازارەکییەکان لە بواری پەیوەندیگرتندا، رووندەکاتەو. نمونەکانی توپژینە وەهە، پەنابەری راستەقینەن لە کەمپەکانی پارێزگای سلیمانی، لە هەریمی کوردستانی عێراقدا. توپژینە وەهە گەیشتوو بەو بەرەنجامەى کە هەلومەرجی سۆسیۆپراگماتیکى پەنابەرانی، کاریگەرییەکی بەرچاوی لەسەر بەکارهێنان و ئەرکەکانی چەند ئاماژەیکى نازارەکیی دیاریکراو، هەیه.

## المخلص

هذا البحث مستل من أطروحة دكتوراه بعنوان "دراسة تداولية اجتماعية للاتصال غير اللفظي في التواصل بين الثقافات: دراسة حالة اللاجئين في إقليم كردستان". عالمياً، أصبح الاتصال غير اللفظي مهم لتعزيز التفاهم والتعاون

الإنساني. لقد ثبت على نطاق واسع أن تفسير وفهم هذا النوع من الاتصال أمران حاسمان بين مختلف الدول والثقافات، والمجموعات العرقية على وجه الخصوص.

اليوم، أصبح اللجوء ظاهرة عالمية، وارتفع عدد اللاجئين بسبب الصراعات السياسية المسلحة في دول الشرق الأوسط. تعتبر منطقة كردستان واحدة من المناطق الساخنة التي لها تاريخ طويل مع اللاجئين. إذ أصبح الشعب الكوردي لاجئاً مرات عديدة من ناحية، وأصبح أرضها ملاذاً للاجئين والمشردين من المناطق المجاورة، من ناحية أخرى. يواجه اللاجئون الكثير من المشاكل السياسية والاقتصادية والاجتماعية والنفسية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك فإن الصعوبات في التواصل اللفظي وغير اللفظي تزيد من معاناتهم. وبالتالي أصبح الحاجة إلى تعزيز الاتصال ضرورياً وعاجلاً لتعامل أفضل معهم باستراتيجيات الاتصال غير اللفظي. هذا البحث، محاولة لشرح وظائف الإشارات غير اللفظية من المنظور التداولي الاجتماعي لحالة اللاجئين.

يبدأ البحث بتحديد بعض التعاريف للمفاهيم التداولية الاجتماعية، والاتصال غير اللفظي، ويمضي في شرح الوظائف الاتصالية للإشارات غير اللفظية. الأمثلة المعروضة هنا هي من مخيمات اللاجئين الحقيقية في محافظة السليمانية، إقليم كردستان العراق. وتستنتج الدراسة أن السياق التداولي الاجتماعي للاجئين له تأثير كبير على استخدام الإشارات غير اللفظية المحددة ووظائفها.

### Abstract

This paper is an extract from a Ph.D. dissertation entitled "A Sociopragmatic Analysis of Nonverbals in Intercultural Communication: A Case Study of Refugees in Kurdistan Region." Nonverbal communication is universally important to enhance better human understanding and cooperation. It has been widely proved that interpretation and comprehension of this type of communication are crucial among diverse nations, cultures, and ethnic groups, in particular.

Nowadays, refugeeism has become a global phenomenon, and the refugee number has risen due to armed political conflicts in Middle-Eastern countries. Kurdistan region is one of the critical areas that have a long history with refugeeism. Kurdish people have become refugees; on the one hand, the Kurdistan region has become a haven for refugees and IDPs of the neighboring areas, on the other hand. Refugees face lots of political, economic, social and psychological problems. Also, difficulties in verbal and nonverbal communication increase their suffering. Thus, the demand for communication reinforcement has become essential and urgent to treat refugees with better nonverbal communication strategies. This paper attempts to explain the functions of nonverbal cues in sociopragmatic refugeeism context.

The paper initiates by outlining some definitions of sociopragmatics, nonverbal communication, and it goes on to explain the communicative functions of nonverbal cues. Examples displayed here are from real refugee camps in Sulaimani Governorate, Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The paper finds out that the sociopragmatic refugee context has an outstanding impact on the usage of specific nonverbal cues and their functions.

**Keywords:** Sociopragmatics, Nonverbal Communication, Nonverbal Behavior Functions, Refugeeism

### 1. Introduction

This paper investigates the influence of sociopragmatic context on nonverbal communication functions in refugee camps environment. There are several functions of nonverbal behaviors; however, those which have communicative values will be analyzed. Few researchers studied the relation between sociopragmatic context and the usage of nonverbal cues, such as investigating the issue in the classroom, workplace, and court environments, which are normal, secure and stable life-situation. No research pursues the issue in the refugee camps context which cannot be regarded as a



normal, secure and stable life-situation. Therefore, an investigation is revealing to show the impacts of sociopragmatic refugeeism context and the usage of nonverbal cues.

## 2. Key Definitions

Sociopragmatics is a dominated field of General Pragmatics. As a term, Sociopragmatics was first coined by Leech to illustrate the study of ways in which pragmatic meanings reflect “specific ‘local’ conditions on language use, and it is the sociological interface of pragmatics” (Leech, 1983, p: 10). In his book, Leech (1983) writes “socio-pragmatics” with a hyphen, but recently it has been generally solid. Additionally, in his book footnotes, Leech attributes the formulation of the Pragmalinguistics/Sociopragmatics distinction to Jenny Thomas (1981, 1983) (cited in Culpeper, 2009, p: 185). Through this term, the connection between the sociopragmatic refugeeism context and the functions of nonverbal cues, which is a major concern of this study, is investigated.

On the other hand, nonverbal communication has been paid a great deal of attention in sociology, because it has a significant impact on the competent presentation of self in everyday life. The awareness of nonverbal communicative norms, i.e., socially acceptable nonverbal behavior according to specific social contexts, is essential to felicitous social interaction. Two main perspectives encompass the study of nonverbal communication in sociology. First, symbolic interactionism has been suggested by Erving Goffman (1956) who believes that the elements of impression management, information control, and being attentive to what human bodies and faces are “telling” others, are important to a successful interaction with others. Secondly, phenomenology suggests that sensory experiences and information are too crucial to the development of a self-sense and to interact with others. Recent studies on nonverbal communication have concentrated on the styles people decorate and mark their bodies to convey information about belonging group membership, and status.

Likewise, pragmatics is regarded as one of the essential fields of study that tackles the issue of nonverbal behavior. Most research, in this respect, concentrates on *context* as the most crucial item that must be studied, while studying nonverbal behavior, simultaneously. Studying language use in context is the core of the domain of pragmatics, similarly almost all the studies in diverse fields of study especially psychology, sociology, and communication insist on regarding context in usage, interpretation, and comprehension of nonverbal behaviors. Eventually, from leech’s definition of sociopragmatic, the current study investigates how the sociological interface of pragmatics influences the usage of nonverbal communication.

## 3. Methodology

Nonverbal behavior can be used as a style, skill, and communication. This paper studies nonverbal behavior as communication from sociopragmatic perspective. The methodology applied involves sampling and data collection tools. Later, the data analysis method has been explained.

### 3.1 Sampling and Data Collection Tools

This study targets refugees in the Kurdistan Region. The samples are randomly selected from refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) camps in Sulaimani Governorate. The camps are composed of refugees and IDPs from a variety of ethnicities (Kurd, Arab), religions (Muslim, Yazidi), and nationalities (Iraqi, Syrian). One hundred participants have been selected randomly during three field visits carried out by the researcher while the most expressive participants that are dealt with for the analysis have been chosen within the whole samples, purposively. The samples’ categorization is displayed in the table (1).

Table (1) Samples’ Categorization

Categories	Ashti Camp	Arbat Camp	Barika Camp	Total
Males	24	32	6	62
Females	15	17	6	38
Total	39	49	12	100



Children	16	18	0	34
Young+ Middle Age	17	21	10	48
Aged	6	10	2	18
Total	39	49	12	100
Kurd	32	0	12	44
Arab	7	49	0	56
Total	39	49	12	100
Muslim/ Sunni	7	49	12	68
Muslim/ Shiite	5	0	0	5
Yazidi	27	0	0	27
Total	39	49	12	100

The study is achieved by applying qualitative research method, and qualitative data collection tools have been used. The tools are an unstructured in-depth interview, participant observation, photographing and video recording techniques.

### 3.2 Data Analysis Method

The method used for data analysis includes a sociopragmatic analysis of functions of nonverbal behavior. This process encompasses the analysis of contextual sociopragmatic variables of the study participants, which are *gender*, *age*, *ethnicity* and *religion*, and their impact on nonverbal behavior functions among refugees.

### 3.3 The Selected Model for Data Analysis

As the study tackles the sociopragmatic perspective and functions of nonverbal behavior, a blended model from Leech's model (1983) of sociopragmatics, and Patterson (2017) model of nonverbal behavior functions have been applied. The details of both models are discussed in the extended version of this study.

## 4. Data Analysis

Since the *context* is a shared point among the models of the current study, the data analysis process of nonverbal cues functions focuses on *refugeesim context*. Thus, four contextual sociopragmatic variables which are *gender*, *age*, *ethnicity*, and *religion* have been analyzed. The purpose behind selecting these variables relates to Patterson's personal factors which involve biology, culture, age, gender, and personality. Ethnicity and religion constitute the most effective components of culture, having impacts on personality as well.

### 4.1 Gender

The relationship between gender and nonverbal communication has often drawn many researchers' attention in the field. Patterson (1983) indicates that the personal experience of most people suggests that males and females often do react differently in social situations. Such differences are mostly displayed in nonverbal cues. Furthermore, Patterson identifies two major aspects in which gender-based nonverbal differences are manifested, firstly in general interaction patterns, and secondly in both encoding and decoding nonverbal messages.

In this paper, data categorization by gender variable (shown in table 2) includes 62 males and 38 females from diverse ages, ethnic and religious backgrounds. Although the participants are taken randomly, the total number of both genders indicates expressiveness and readiness for verbal communication among male participants rather than the females. This may belong to the cultural norms that offer more opportunities for male social interactions than female members. However, the female participants are observed to be more expressive than the male participants in encoding



nonverbal face messages. The observer can see the depth of sorrow, disappointment, and grief on female faces.

Additionally, in same-sex interactions, this study like plenty of other research concludes that females typically prefer higher levels of involvement with one another than males do. This situation is reflected by female participants' selecting closer distances than males, both in dyadic or larger group interactions. Moreover, females engage in more gaze with one another than males do. Touch also appears to be more frequent and more positively evaluated among females rather than males. On the other hand, in opposite-sex pairs, patterns of involvement as a function of gender are more complicated and conditional (cited in Patterson, 1983, p: 146). Generally, males and females differ in their usage of proxemics, gaze direction, and touch.

Table (2) Participants Categorization According to Gender

Camps	Males	Females	Total
Ashti	24	15	39
Arbat	32	17	49
Barika	6	6	12
Total	62	38	100

#### 4.2 Age

Age is a sociopragmatic variable that affects the use of nonverbal cues. Human beings deal with verbal and nonverbal communication according to their life stages: infancy, adolescence, adulthood, and aging. Before they know how to express verbal messages, infants learn how to communicate nonverbally, and they acquire the ability to point out their necessities by nonverbal cues, especially postures, gestures, and proxemics. Studies show that the capacity to interact nonverbally enhances human communication development remarkably (Selinger & Olson, 2014). According to Patterson (1983) age is one of the personal factors that may contribute to distinct patterns of involvement in social interaction.

Table (3) shows data based on the study participants' age, which includes 34 children, 48 young and middle age, and 18 aged participants from both genders with diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds. The age-related variations in participants' nonverbal cues especially vocal qualities, age-stereotyping facial cues, and kinesics show deep grief and disappointment while children with their innocent faces rarely show sorrow and sadness even in their negative circumstances. They attempt adaptation to the new environment of living in a refugee camp, far from their city. They even try to create playing tools from the simple materials available in the camp. In the Appendix, participants (1-A, 1-B) represent this specific context. In addition, emotional expression and sensitivity to emotion cues have been pursued in the study samples which demonstrate that older adults decode emotion information, particularly negative information, somewhat less accurate than the younger adults.

Table (3) Participants Categorization According to Age

Camps	Children	Young+ Middle Age	Aged	Total
Ashti	16	17	6	39
Arbat	18	21	10	49
Barika	-	10	2	12
Total	34	48	18	100

#### 4.3 Ethnicity

Macmillan dictionary defines *Ethnicity* as the fact that someone belongs to a particular ethnic group. Martin and Nakayama (2010) explain ethnic identity as a set of ideas about one's ethnic group membership. It typically includes several dimensions, such as self-identification, knowledge about the ethnic culture (traditions, customs, values, and behaviors), and feeling about belonging to a particular ethnic group. Ethnic identity just like age, gender, and religious identities are vital to



nonverbal interactions due to the relationship between ethnic identity and culture in general, which composes a considerable proportion of national culture of any society. Individuals are influenced by their ethnic identity which they mostly consider its traditions, customs, and values, verbal and nonverbal behaviors. Researchers suggest that ethnic and racial differences are to be carefully regarded in nonverbal communication understanding.

In this study, ethnic significances can be recognized through nonverbal behavior observation and in-depth interviews of the study participants in the selected refugee camps. From an ethnic perspective, the participants can be classified into two major ethnic groups: 44 Kurdish and 56 Arab cases. Generally, the Arab refugees are more expressive and readier to participate in the study than the Kurdish ones. The Arab refugees, especially the adult males tend to control the interaction situation by their paralinguistic cues, such as voice tone and volume; moreover, their kinesics expresses social control. These behaviors probably belong to their ethnic feeling of superiority as being the major ethnic group in Iraq. Unlike the Arab refugees, most Kurdish adult males avoid participation in the study, and even some verbally refused to take part in the interviews. Undoubtedly, *silence* is one of the most important nonverbal cues that convey lots of messages.

Regarding the reasons behind their silence or disinclination to participate by most male Kurdish refugees may encompass deep disappointment, fed up with sorrow, anger, and fear, as resistance to their current catastrophic circumstances, or they may have lost any ray of hope of any immediate change to their traumatic life. On the other hand, some female Kurdish refugees have agreed to take part in the study. Probably, this situation refers to their wishes for positive changes, or they have just tended to express their deep sorrow and share it with a foreigner. As mentioned in the *Gender* section, Patterson (1983) suggests that males and females often do react differently in social situations. Table (4) shows data categorization by ethnicity.

Table (4) Participants Categorization According to Ethnicity

Camps	Kurd	Arab	Total
Ashti	32	7	39
Arbat	-	49	49
Barika	12	-	12
Total	44	56	100

#### 4.4 Religion

Patterson (1983) suggests that religion probably affects habitual patterns of nonverbal involvement. Religion has its unique nonverbal codes that are familiar to the religious group to whom an individual belongs. Religion creates an identity for its followers who act verbally and nonverbally, accordingly. In a study accomplished by Yilmaz (2017, p: 7), the results show the female religious participants are less explicit in their nonverbal interactions, and they avoid eye-contact and touch with the opposite sex. Likewise, the use of kinesics and intimate space by the religious male participants was rather limited in the same context. Each religious group has its traditions, customs, values, verbal and nonverbal behaviors which must be regarded by its followers. This case is especially manifested in nonverbal cues, such as kinesics, eye-contact, using artifacts, smell, touch.

In this study, Sunni Muslim refugees and IDPs constitute 68% of the participants. This is due to armed conflicts in their home areas in Iraq and Syria. Yazidi Kurdish refugees come in the second place 27% while Shiite Muslim refugees compose just 5% of the randomly selected samples. Some religions communicate and show their religious differences by their clothing. For instance, Muslim female participants in the visited camps are often veiled reflecting the Muslim guidelines of female modesty while Yazidi ones are not.



Table (5) Participants Categorization According to Religion

Camps	Muslim		Yazidi	Total
	Sunni	Shiite		
Ashti	7	5	27	39
Arbat	49	-	-	49
Barika	12	-	-	12
Total	68	5	27	100

The researcher has observed that the religious traditions and norms as nonverbal behavior are adopted in the refugee camps. These are manifested in using artifacts, praying ceremonies, and celebrating religious occasions. Moreover, diverse religious groups coexist peacefully, and nonverbally behave in a friendly way with each other.

### 5. Functions of Nonverbal Communication

Scholars have paid particular attention to the functions of nonverbal behaviors from various perspectives, such as psychology, sociology, linguistics, anthropology, and recent media and communication studies. Nonverbal communication is an essential part of the total communication process. Hence, the full understanding of verbal messages is completed by understanding the nonverbal messages that accompany them or occur in their absence. Nonverbal cues are integral to communication; they can even change the meaning of verbal messages, e.g., the wink of an eye, a specific facial expression, a paralinguistic cue, body movement, use of space, or touch. Consequently, the improvement of the ability to use and interpret nonverbal behavior and contextual cues leads to a better understanding of interpersonal and intercultural relationships. Verbal and nonverbal communications have a mutual relationship, whereas words are best at conveying thoughts or ideas, i.e., *what is said*, nonverbal cues are best at revealing information about relational matters such as liking, respect, and social control, i.e., *how it is said*. Indeed, the meaning of each type of verbal or nonverbal communication cannot be interpreted without carefully considering the other (Gamble, and Gamble, 2013, p: 153).

Patterson has organized nonverbal behavior into basic functions or purposes of communication; nonverbal cues are meaningful only when considered regarding an exchange of expressions between participants in an interaction. This relational nature of behaviors must be regarded sensitively to the behavioral context of every interlocutor, or for the third parties viewing participants in a primary relationship. The basic functions of nonverbal behavior are related to the management (both presentation and interpretation) of those acts primarily involved in the social interaction (cited in Hargie, 2006, p: 89).

In the current study, the functions of nonverbal cues will be dealt with according to the selected model. Patterson (2017) has identified five functions of nonverbal cues which are: providing information, regulating interaction, expressing intimacy, exercising influence, and managing impressions. Eventually, the same nonverbal cues can convey various functions. They reveal different interpretations according to the sociopragmatic variables, such as age, gender, relationship or familiarity among the participants in the interaction, and the context in which the act of communication takes place. For example, *gaze* may convey interest, admiration, scorn, warning, guiding, in the different settings of household, party, racist situation, court, and classroom.

#### 5.1 Providing Information

Information is sent and received in social settings, continuously. Appearance characteristics indicate basic information about gender, race, age, and fitness. Socioeconomic status, group membership, and even personal interests are often signified by artifacts, especially clothing, grooming, and jewelry. On the other hand, behavior provides additional information about personality, attitudes, feelings, and even motives in the situation (Patterson, 2017, p: 7).

Providing information is considered the essential function from an impression formation or decoder perspective. The decoder may elicit aspects of the encoder's acquired dispositions and



temporary states, or the meaning of a verbal interaction when observing an encoder's (actor's) behavioral patterns. Facial cues are usually emphasized to infer emotional expressions. However, other nonverbal cues are also crucial in formulating the impression, such as the postural, paralinguistic, and visual channels (Hargie, 2006, p: 88).

Patterson (1983) argues that the most basic function of nonverbal behavior might be described as informational. A great deal of specific information is transmitted by the face, although it can also deceive. Specifically, the decoder might evaluate a particular pattern of encoder behavior and infer something about:

- A. The encoder's characteristic dispositions
- B. The encoder's more fleeting reactions
- C. The meaning of a verbal exchange

Additionally, nonverbal behavior can be informative in a second way; in this sense, such behavior may relate only indirectly to interaction. Particularly, an encoder's behavior may provide feedback that supports to define his/her feeling states (Patterson, 1983, p: 35). Moreover, Patterson (2017) confirms that appearance characteristics and behaviors facilitate expectations and adaptive reactions to others. Behavior happens first, and it affects how people think and feel later.

Applying Patterson's model on the selected participants, providing information function is explained and exemplified. Concerning the sociopragmatic variables, the selected participants represent different age, gender, ethnicity, and religion while the relationship between the decoder (observer) and the encoder(s) / actor (s) is the researcher-interviewee (s) relationship and the type of communication is intercultural, i.e., Kurd-Arab, and Muslim-Yazidi interactions. However, the context of the communication acts is the same which is the status of being refugees in the refugee camps.

Participant (2) is an aged Sunni Arab female; her nonverbal cues provide lots of information about her personality, and life circumstances of being a refugee and living in a camp. Her body posture conveys anxiety, exhaustion, and hopelessness. Her facial expressions accompany her body posture in revealing her emotional status. Her straying gaze displays thinking about their idle, monotonous life as refugees. She seems to have nothing to say, preferring silence to speech as a protest against their catastrophic life. Furthermore, her kinesics especially her hands reveal closure and disappointment from any immediate solutions of their crisis as a refugee. Concerning paralinguistic cues, her tone also conveys being exhausted and fatigue to deal with any conversation, her short answers express her tendency to avoid providing much information about their living conditions.

Sociopragmatically her appearance characteristics represent an aged Muslim Arab female refugee. Thus, all that previously mentioned and also her usage of artifacts and even color prove that her nonverbal cues are age and gender-based patterns. Her simple dark clothes reveal her living conditions. The familiarity between her and the researcher is temporary, and this influences her short answers, however, sharing a similar culture has led to accept the interview and be comfortable to participate. Generally, the context of the refugee camp has impacts on her verbal and nonverbal behavior.

Unlike participant (2), participant (3) is an aged Sunni Arab male, his body posture reveals his readiness to join the conversation, answer any questions, and tend to provide information as much as he knows. His paralinguistic cues confirm his body posture expressions; his tone conveys self-confidence, calmness, and stability of old age experience. His facial cues display his inner feeling, his eyes and V-shaped brows reveal his attention to the participants in the interaction. His situation reflects his gender-based behaviors. Usually, in eastern societies, men tend to interact and express themselves more independently than women. That is why he engages in a long conversation with self-confidence. Hence, culture influences his behavior. He interacts with the researcher familiarly probably because of the shared background of being Muslims and living in the same country, Iraq.



Participant (4) is a young Yazidi Kurdish female; her body posture conveys helplessness, disappointment, deep sorrow and grief of what had happened to her family, relatives, and fellow citizens. Leaning her body to one side mostly is a symptom of social anxiety. Her paralinguistic cues reveal her sad emotion; her soft and low tone expresses her negative psychological situation. Her body motions especially the facial expressions confirm her physical and psychological negative circumstances. Her eyes convey the disaster she had passed through and even the distant hope of returning home in an early future. Table (6) shows the function of nonverbal cues: providing information.

Table (6) Providing Information Function

Participant Code No.	Types of appearances characteristic nonverbal cues convey				Types of behavioral information nonverbal cues convey (attitude, feelings, motives)
	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Religion	
2	Female	Aged	Arab	Muslim/Sunni	anxiety, exhaustion, hopelessness, disappointment
3	Male	Aged	Arab	Muslim/Sunni	readiness to interact, self-confidence
4	Female	Young	Kurd	Yazidi	helplessness, disappointment, social anxiety

### 5.2 Regulating Interaction

Patterson (2017) confirms the central role that nonverbal communication has in the routine give-and-take among people in social settings, and he supports Goffman's sociological classification of "focused and unfocused interactions." Goffman identifies focused interactions as a real verbal conversation among interlocutors while unfocused interactions refer to the interactions that occurred without words (cited in Patterson, 2017, p: 7).

According to Patterson, nonverbal behaviors have impacts on both focused and unfocused interactions. In unfocused interactions, people negotiate their position and relationship with each other through their nonverbal behavior, e.g., standing in the queue at the bakery, picking a seat in a waiting room, or meeting people in the elevator. On the other hand, "in focused interactions, nonverbal communication facilitates the efficient give-and-take of verbal exchanges." For instance, different nonverbal behaviors of speakers and listeners in an interaction, such as gestures, various types of gaze (gaze avoidance, breaking gaze, protracted gaze, prolonged gaze), head nods, vocalizations (uh-huh, umm, oh, pauses) convey different meanings and messages. They may reveal emphasis, anxiety, subordination, indifference, reading the reaction of the interlocutor, ending a speaker's turn, understanding or agreement, reinforcing speaker's comments, getting the interlocutor's feedback (Ibid).

Eventually, Patterson (2017, 1983) argues that nonverbal communication is critical in conversations' taking turns. He further distinguishes two types of nonverbal cues which are involved in regulating interactions: the first is structural aspects that remain relatively stable throughout an interaction. These behaviors provide the structure of a framework for interaction called "standing features" of interaction and include posture, body orientation, and interpersonal distance. In contrast to the standing features, the second type is "dynamic features" which affects momentary changes in conversational sequences, such as facial expression, gaze, as well as a variety of paralinguistic cues such as tone, the pitch of voice, and change in voice volume. This function of interaction regulation is investigated in the following participants; shown in table No.7.

Participant (5) is a young Syrian Kurdish male. His behavioral standing features including his body posture, orientation, and interpersonal distance reveal his attention to participate in the interaction, preferring sitting to standing. However, his body orientation conveys the desire to end the conversation immediately. He uses public space distance in the interaction. On the other hand, his dynamic behavioral features like facial expression, gaze, and paralinguistic cues organize his



turn-taking although he avoids direct gaze which is a sociocultural behavior in almost all eastern societies as a matter of respect between Muslim males and females.

Participant (6) is a young Syrian Kurdish female refugee. Her behavioral standing features including her body posture, orientation, and interpersonal distance convey her psychological status of hesitation, shyness, and even disinclination to continue a conversation with a foreigner. She uses her dynamic features like facial expression, gaze, and paralinguistic cues to regulate turn-taking.

Participant (7) is an aged Yazidi Kurdish male; his body posture and orientation reveal his readiness to participate in an interaction actively, and he is aware of using the public distance properly. Concerning his dynamic behaviors, he organizes his turn-taking by gaze and changing his voice tone and volume.

Table (7) Regulating Interaction Function

Participant Code No.	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Religion	Type of the function nonverbal cues convey
5	Male	Young	Syrian- Kurdish	Muslim	Pausing to take a turn
6	Female	Young	Syrian- Kurdish	Muslim	Taking part in the conversation
7	Male	Aged	Kurd	Yazidi	Turn-taking

### 5.3 Expressing Intimacy

Intimacy belongs to liking, attraction, or the degree of 'union' or 'openness toward another person.' Generally, intimacy might be described as a bipolar dimension reflecting the degree of union or openness. Mutual gazing, intimate interpersonal proxemics, and mutual touching are examples of communicating intimacy (Hargie, 2006, p: 88). Intimacy is a significant element in most relationships. Thus, the level of nonverbal involvement increases as relationship intimacy increases. For example, a higher level of nonverbal involvement is observed among close friends than among mere acquaintances (Patterson, 2017, p: 8). Expressing intimacy has great significance in understanding and predicting the nature of nonverbal acts during an interaction, and it can also indicate types of human relationships, such as family, relative, close friendship, familiarity, acquaintance, business, and official relationships. As a result, high intimacy may typically be reflected by high levels of nonverbal involvement. The following participants exemplify the function of expressing intimacy; shown in table No. 8.

Participant (8) is a middle-aged Yazidi Kurdish female with her little children. Their situation reflects their intimate interpersonal proxemics as a family. Here, mutual gaze and also touch are common which expresses intimacy, union, and openness. High level of intimacy continues among family members both in positive and negative life circumstances. In addition to the paralinguistic cues, people express their sorrow in catastrophic times mostly through direct gaze and touch by hugging their beloved ones.

Participants (9) are two middle-aged Sunni Arab males. Their situation conveys their relationship as friends, or at least as close acquaintance because they are originally from the same city, living at the same refugee camp momentarily. Gazing and shaking hands are common among them. Also, one can notice the personal distance among them while they stand in their public distance from the researcher.

Participant (10) represents two IDPs, Iraqi Sunni Arab citizens, the first is a young woman who is one of the camp residents, and the second is a young man who has been appointed as a monitor in the camp. The context is distributing portions of meat granted by some charity activists. The nonverbal cues convey the state that the young woman suffers. She has covered her face so as not to be recognized at this embarrassing situation, avoiding direct gaze or touch. She was standing in the public space until her turn comes when she is obliged to advance to get her portion, expressing least intimacy. This context is an example of obliged intimacy where the lowest level of intimacy nonverbal involvement is observed.



Table (8) Expressing Intimacy Function

Participant Code No.	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Religion	Type of the function nonverbal cues convey
8	Female+ little children	Middle-aged	Kurd	Yazidi	Expressing high intimacy, union, and openness among family members
9	2 Males	Young	Arab	Muslim/Sunni	expressing intimacy among close friends
10	1 Male+ 1Female	Young Young	Arab Arab	Muslim/Sunni Muslim/Sunni	expressing least intimacy among foreigners

#### 5.4 Exercising Influence

Exercising influence function has been described by Patterson (2017) as “goal-oriented behavior initiated to change the behavior, attitudes, and feelings of others.” He further classifies nonverbal influence into several different categories. First, nonverbal influence expresses *power* and *dominance* through gaze, paralinguistic cues, controlling large territories, and expensive furniture. Second, nonverbal communication provides *feedback* and *reinforcement* through a smile, patting on the back, and head nod. Third, nonverbal influence is important in *compliance* and *persuasion* which can be expressed by a close approach, increased gaze and touch. Finally, nonverbal communication is essential in *deception*. According to Patterson, effective deception requires consistency between verbal and nonverbal behaviors. Facial expression and gestures are the most dominant nonverbal cues used in deception. Mostly, the act of deception can be disclosed when there is an inconsistency between verbal expressions and nonverbal behaviors.

Previously, Patterson (1983) used the term “Social control” instead of “Exercising influence” which functions to persuade others and indicate status differences related to the roles of the participants in an interaction. Nonverbal cues that are involved in social control can be identified as gaze patterns, touch to display status differences, and eye contact, direct body orientation, and vocal intonation to attempt to persuade a person to accept another’s point of view (Hargie, 2006, p: 88). The following participants exemplify the function of exercising influence, shown in table No. 9.

Participant (11) represents two old-aged IDPs, Iraqi Sunni Arab males. They discuss their different points of view on a topic. One of them tries to persuade the other by showing power over him. He uses his gaze and touch to display his different status, and eye contact, direct body orientation, and vocal intonation to persuade the other to accept his opinion. He emphasizes and completes his verbal message through his nonverbal cues. In this specific context, the most significant one might be *touch*; he catches the other participant’s arm to make him listen and persuade him to accept his viewpoint.

Participant (12) represents a young Iraqi Sunni Arab widow who has lost her husband in armed conflicts in Iraq. All her nonverbal cues emphasize and complete her psychological and social status. Her indirect gaze, body orientation, and vocal intonation reveal her sorrowful life and her desire not to engage in a long conversation. However, her nonverbal behaviors convey a sort of social control over her young son with whom she lives.

Participant (13) is a middle-aged Iraqi Sunni Arab male. He works as a preacher at the camp. His nonverbal cues reinforce his social status usually Imam or Khatib has in the Muslim communities. His knowledge and education are completed by his nonverbal behaviors to influence others and persuade them with his opinions.

Table (9) Exercising Influence Function

Participant Code No.	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Religion	Type of functions nonverbal cues convey
11	2 Males	2 Aged	Arab	Islam/Sunni	power, dominance, persuasion
12	Female	Young	Arab	Islam/Sunni	a sort of social control over her young son
13	Male	middle-aged	Arab	Islam/Sunni	reinforcing his social status

### 5.5 Managing Impressions

Impression management is one of the essential functions of nonverbal communication. Patterson (2017) suggests that people can change their appearances, clothing, grooming and their behavior, to establish particular images or identities. Moreover, some spend considerable time, resources, and energy to obtain a more desirable appearance. Nonverbal behavior changes can be conscious or unconscious when people enter a specific setting with an aim to create a particular impression in others, for example, job interview, meeting important people, political elections, refugee camps settings. This function could be observed in some study participants; shown in Table No.10.

Participant (14) is an aged Iraqi Sunni Arab female. Her nonverbal cues manage the impression of her status as a refugee, living in a miserable life. She is wearing a sort of Kurdish women overcoat, locally called "kolawana." Refugees from both genders in her camp do not mind wearing Kurdish dressing. Hence, changing the appearances especially clothing does not target identity changing but probably as sociopragmatic integration with the host local Kurdish community around them or not having any other type of clothes at such hard circumstances as refugees.

Participant (15) represents a young Iraqi Sunni Arab male. He is working as a wager with a humanitarian agency. Thus, his nonverbal cues reveal a sort of dominance or self-satisfaction, compared to the other participants who are idle and unemployed. His body motions express activeness, and readiness to act at a suitable time. His facial expressions convey insistence on challenging and facing life obstacles that he, his family, and relatives endure. His standing posture encompasses self-confidence and bearing responsibilities. Signals of anxiety are exhibited by increased blinking and facial movement, such as his v-shaped brows. His appearance, hairstyle, and clothing express his simple lifestyle due to the hard circumstances have been passing through as a refugee. His simple, not mechanized clothing indicates the possibility that it is his working dress or maybe the single one that he owns. Although he is Arab, he has put on Kurdish men trousers called "sharwal." Usually, Kurdish men do not put on belts with shirt and sharwal except in the working places. Thus, he may imitate Kurdish workers who find this dressing style facilitates movements during hard works or possibly this makes him be easily integrated with the local host community.

Participant (16) is an adult Iraqi Sunni Arab male. He has returned after he had failed to find a daily job outside the camp. His body posture, intonation, facial expression, and hand movements express disappointment, sorrow, and misery of refugee life. Like the participant (15), this participant also has dressed in local Kurdish trousers probably to integrate sociopragmatically in the host community and find a proper job to earn his living. Although he had failed to find one the day of the interview, he had had a glimmer of hope to find a job shortly.

Table (10) Managing Impressions Function

Participant Code No.	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Religion	Type of functions nonverbal cues convey
14	Female	Aged	Arab	Islam/Sunni	Managing the impression of integration
15	Male	Young	Arab	Islam/Sunni	Managing the impression of dominance
16	Male	Adult	Arab	Islam/Sunni	Managing the impression of readiness to work



## 6. Conclusions

Based on the collected data analysis, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- Awareness of different functions of nonverbal communication is crucial in dealing with refugees to decrease their sufferings.
- The contextual sociopragmatic variables have an impact on using, producing, and comprehending nonverbal communication which are: gender, age, ethnicity, and religion.
- The context of refugeeism influences using specific types of nonverbal behavior, such as facial expressions, body postures, and paralinguistic cues.
- Most of the female participants feel shy, and lack self-confidence, but the males are ready to interact with self-confidence due to the social background and cultural norms that provide more opportunities for male dominance and participation.
- Nonverbal cues convey various functions, such as providing information, regulating interaction, expressing intimacy, exercising influence, and managing impressions.
- Providing information and managing impressions are the most significant functions mostly observed in the studied samples.
- The complementary role of nonverbal communication constitutes an indispensable system for felicitous communication.

## References

1. Culpeper, J. (2009). Historical Sociopragmatics: An Introduction. *Journal of Historical Pragmatics* 10:2, 179-186. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
2. Gamble, Teri K. & Gamble, Michael W. (2013). *Interpersonal Communication: Building Connections Together*. Sage (projekter.aau.dk) Publications
3. Goffman, E. (1956). *The Presentation of Self in Every Day Life*. University of Edinburgh, Social Sciences Research Centre
4. Hargie, O. (2006) *The Handbook of Communication Skills*. The Taylor & Francis e-Library
5. Leech, G. (1983). *Principles of Pragmatics*. Longman, London, and New York
6. Macmillan dictionary, <https://www.macmillandictionary.com/>
7. Martin, Judith N. & Nakayama, Thomas K. (2010). *Intercultural Communication in* (www.onu.cl) Context. The McGraw-Hill Companies
8. Patterson, M. L. (1983). *Nonverbal Behavior: A Functional Perspective*. Springer- Verlag New York Inc.
9. Patterson, M. L. (2017). *Nonverbal Communication*. In Reference Module in Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Psychology, Elsevier, 2017, 1-10. ISBN 9780128093245
10. Selinger, L. & Oslen, K. (2014). *Nonverbal Communication in Infancy*. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/developing-minds/201406/nonverbal-communication-in-infancy>
11. Yilmaz, Ozan C. (2017). *Social Identity Performance through Proxemics, Haptics, and Kinesics*. (www.academia.edu) Budapest Metropolitan University [https://www.academia.edu/34926882/Identity\\_Performance\\_Through\\_Non-verbal\\_Communication\\_Social\\_Identity\\_Performance\\_Through\\_Proxemics\\_Haptics](https://www.academia.edu/34926882/Identity_Performance_Through_Non-verbal_Communication_Social_Identity_Performance_Through_Proxemics_Haptics)



## Appendix



Participants (1-A)



Participants (1-B)



Participant (2)



Participant (3)



Participant (4)



Participant (5)



Participant (6)



Participant (7)



Participants (8)



Participants (9)



Participants (10)



Participants (11)



Participants (12)



Participant (13)



Participant (14)



Participant (15)



Participant (16)